

## NEWS

# Chancellor pledges more money for poorer areas

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, has pledged that Brexit will allow for extra money to be invested into "less affluent" areas of the country like Grimsby and its food processing industry.

Mr Hammond, who toured the Grimsby Institute during a visit to the town yesterday, also suggested that the constituency seat may go to the Conservative's parliamentary candidate, Jo Gideon, because "more people are not just going to vote in the way that their parents and grandparents did".

He also refused to be drawn on his future as chancellor if Mrs May remains Prime Minister, following reports in the media that the pair had fallen out.

Speaking after he fielded questions from business leaders during a conference at the Institute held behind closed doors, Mr Hammond said towns like Grimsby can prosper after Brexit because extra money will be made available in a so-called 'British prosperity fund'.

"At the moment we're paying our money into the European Union and then they are dispensing it in the way which suits their European-wide agenda," he said.

"What we will be able to do is use that funding to design a British specific solution that we want to support here at home in agriculture and food processing and other areas.

"The money will be redirected into a British prosperity fund, which we will use to support areas of the country which are less affluent and pros-

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perous at the moment to help close the gap."

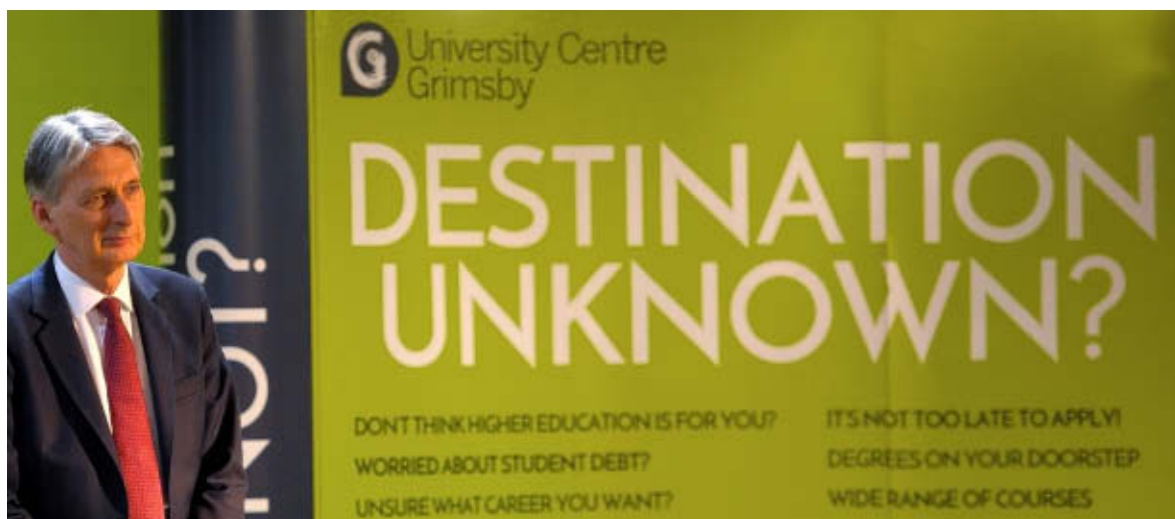
Flanked by Jo Gideon, who is hoping to become the first Conservative to hold the Great Grimsby parliamentary seat since Walter Womersley MP held onto it in 1935, Mr Hammond said people who would not normally consider themselves Conservative voters are considering voting for the party in the snap election.

"This is a great place, a great candidate, a great leader in Theresa May and an election where I think more and more people are not just going to vote in the way that their parents and grandparents did," he added.

"More and more people are going to ask themselves the question about what is good for our country and what is good for them and their families.

"I expect large numbers of voters who have perhaps never voted Conservative before and perhaps would not even think of themselves as Conservative voters will look at Theresa May and say this a person with the backbone and the strength to lead this country through this critical period and make the best of our future."

Pressed as to whether he would retain his job if the Conservatives won the General Election, Mr Hammond said: "All of us are concentrating on winning the election.



## Top Minister says Brexit will mean extra cash for 'less affluent' parts of country and backs local Tory candidates

Come June 9 if Theresa May wins the election and forms the next Government obviously it will be for her to decide who she wants to have in that Government and I'm not going to speculate on that today.

"What we are focused on is winning the election. We're not going to be presumptuous and start talking about who is going to be doing what job after an election we haven't even won yet."

Conservative candidate Jo Gideon said: "The chancellor today set out how our manifesto will help build a stronger, fairer, more prosperous Grimsby. Focusing on growth in regions like ours, away from London, by investing in; education, training, transport infrastructure, and coastal towns.

"Only a vote for Theresa May's strong and stable leadership can help protect our economy and deliver for Grimsby."

Labour's Melanie Onn said: "It's insulting for Philip Hammond to suggest that the only reason people in Grimsby haven't voted for the Conservatives in the past is that they haven't thought about it properly.

"People go into every General Election asking which party will be best for them, their family, and the country.

"In the last seven years under the Tories people in Grimsby haven't had a pay rise, but now the Conservatives are planning to raise their taxes and cut pensioners' incomes."

Ukip's Great Grimsby candidate Mike Hookem said: "Phillip Hammond's comments are nothing more than top Tory spin.

"Hammond is talking about a Prime Minister who despite talking tough on Brexit, delayed triggering article 50 for over nine months."

Liberal Democrat candidate Steve Beasant said: "Yet again we have another Tory Minister turning up in Grimsby, but after this election when the Tories have a huge majority, they will just disappear, leaving our area once again neglected. Where have they been for the last few years?"

Independent candidate Christina McGilligan-Fell added: "Hammond is focused here on finance and that is of course an issue but not everything is just money, survival has always been about understanding the right ideas.

"Lincolnshire has been about agriculture for a very long time and we have an opportunity to adopt a more nuanced husbandry."



**HIGH-PROFILE VISIT:** Chancellor of the Exchequer Phillip Hammond at the Grimsby Institute. Left, the Chancellor with Institute vice-principal Claire Foster. Pictures: Jon Corken



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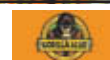
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**ARRIVAL:** Chancellor of the Exchequer Phillip Hammond meets Cleethorpes Conservative candidate Martin Vickers as Grimsby candidate Jo Gideon looks on.